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1

it was greenleaf. the sun shone brightly, casting its golden light onto the earth.

2

i was hunting with my mentor, ivythorn. a gray she-cat with a raspy voice and a venomous attitude, she was a force to be reckoned with.

3

she was hungry, apparently. her stomach growled loudly, and she growled back at it. a rustle sounded in a nearby bush as if on cue.

4

in a flash, ivythorn killed the creature that made the noise. a small shrew.

5

she ate the shrew, copper eyes lusting. "are you satiated?" i spat, my narrowed eyes trained on her.

6

"what?"
"you're not supposed to eat before feeding the kits and elders!"
"what are you talking about?"

7

frustrated with her attempt to act innocent, i hissed, "you just ate that mouse before feeding the elders and kits."
"emberpaw, are you alright?" her eyes betrayed no emotion other than confusion and concern.

8

"yes. i'm fine, but are you?!"
"i don't want to have to report you as.. *unwell.* i haven't eaten anything."
"yes you have!"
"no."

9

this continued for awhile, until it worked.
"now, tell me what really happened."
"you heard a rustling in the bush and found something," i rehearsed. "it was a shrew. you were about to kill it when it suddenly scurried away."

10

"good. now we must hunt."

11

we arrived back to camp with our jaws filled with prey.

12

that was the day a monster was born.

13

moons later, my warrior ceremony took place.

14

i am emberstrike now.

15

the next couple of moons were dark. two particular cats were killed.

16

they were both killed in the same way. eyes gouged out, stomach clawed open.

17

ivythorn killed yellowblaze, and i killed lionstar. they were the deputy and leader of hillclan. ivythorn asked me to help her kill yellowblaze and i told her i'd rather kill lionstar. he was on his last life and she believed i could kill him easily. she agreed.

18

yellowblaze was ivythorn's sister. she was unhappy and depressed because yellowblaze always got all the attention and love. she was putting herself out of her own misery, as ivythorn phrased it.

19

lionstar was my *father*. it was a well known fact, but it didn't even feel like he really was. he was never with me and when he was he was cold and distant.

20

i decided to lie. i hated that she despised her sister; yellowblaze was always there for her! so i figured getting her killed by the clan would be good enough punishment.

21

my story was i was talking to my father during the night; ivythorn stalked into his den after killing her sister and pushed lionstar down. she ran her claws down his exposed throat and, unsure if she did the job, clawed out his eyes. she didn't see me because i was blended into the floor.

22

half the clan didn't believe me, and half did. so she was exiled. hillclan was full of fleabrains.

23

i was hunting one day and i was visited by a distinct gray she-cat.

24

"you... *foxheart!*"

25

the old cat snarled at me. "you deserve to know how it feels to be an outcast." she darted into camp when she noticed my fighting stance.

26

i ran after her. why was she so quick?!

27

my clan was gathered around me by the time i arrived.

28

willowstar, the newly appointed leader, and cherryfern, the new deputy, were at the front of the cats with ivythorn.

29

"we know what you did."

30

"you will be punished with death." willowstar continued.

31

ivythorn spoke up. "may i do the honors?"

32

willowstar dipped his head. "it's the least i could offer."

33

ivythorn purred, bloodlust glazing her eyes.

34

"wait!" i yowled. "how could you blame *me* for the murder of my father?! ivythorn, you are a clan-betraying liar!" i yelled out *the truth.*

35

"you killed him. *and* your sister."

36

"he's not lying," sparroweye, the medicine cat with the innate ability to tell lies, whispered to willowstar.

37

"yes he is!" ivythorn screeched.

38

willowstar glared at her. "i shouldn't have let an *exile* into my camp and make me believe some lie."

39

"no! i'm not lying, i swear!"

40

"cherryfern, kill her." willowstar ordered emotionlessly with a flick of his tail.

41

i watched, satisfied, as cherryfern swiftly pinned ivythorn down, and with a final screech, ivythorn's soul left the living world.

42

the days after dragged by.

43

i settled into my comfy feather nest, and when i awoke i was in the middle of hillclan territory; the forest north from camp.

44

i looked around, confused. suddenly a familiar voice sounded from behind me. i snapped my head back.

45

"i was wrong," ivythorn said, poison dripping from her voice. "you don't deserve to know how it feels to be outcasted. you deserve to know how it feels to be dead."

46

i screeched as she lunged at me, claws extended. she dug into my shoulders and deathbit me.

47

she dragged my dead body across the forest, dodging trees and bushes, until we reached a cold, barren place. there i awoke.

48

ivythorn noticed i was awake and sneered. she ran off somewhere, the darkness consuming her running form.

49

i looked down at my pelt and realized i was soaked in blood. i looked up at the night sky and realized the stars were ridden from the black expanse.

50

now stories of myself and the old hag are passed down from elder to apprentice; a young black tomcat and an old gray tabby she-cat. black and gray. ember and ivy.

trivia

- in part nine, ivythorn taught emberstrike how to alter his memory of an event
- emberstrike's father is actually willowstar; lionstar only acted as his father because willowstar didnt feel able to
- sparroweye cant actually tell lies. she just thinks she can
- ivythorn and yellowblaze were verbally and physically abused by their mother, heatherleaf
- yellowblaze killed heatherleaf without ivythorn's knowing, that's the real reason why she hates her
- if emberstrike wasn't killed, he would've became deputy
- sparroweye came to the conclusion that emberstrike had eaten an infected mouse and gotten HSP
- lionstar looks like lionblaze, yellowblaze is cream colored, sparroweye is calico, willowstar is a gray tabby, and cherryfern has a red pelt